

The Woman's Page of The Times-Dispatch

Hot Cross Buns

Poor Robin's Almanack, published in 1733, has a verse on hot cross buns, which says:

"Good Friday comes, the old woman runs
With one or two-a-penny hot cross buns,
Whose virtue is, if you believe what's said,
They'll not grow mouldy like the common bread."

These verses recall traditions of the busy little Jacks and Jills, who with Juden baskets of every size and sort, formerly sped through alleys, streets and courts of English cities, bearing their spiky burden with great care and hastened every step lest their buns may not be piping hot.

As they went their voices, high and clear, cried their wares, the call "One a-penny, two a-penny hot cross buns" sounding like familiar music in the ears of their customers. In the estimation of honest eighteenth century English citizens, hot cross buns stood unrivaled, not even ginger bread or parliament or hampshire or eally lun being held in higher esteem.

Old Beliefs.
It is an old belief that the eating of buns on Good Friday protects a house from fire. Pastry cooks and bakers formerly sold with each other in making excellent buns. The demand and the quality of the buns have alike decreased.

Royal Bun Houses.
In Chelsea, England, during the eighteenth century, there stood two royal bun houses. A piazza, the width of the footpath, extended along the front of each, and beneath these piazzas crowds of customers assembled to scramble for a chance of purchasing royal hot cross Chelsea buns. Several hundreds of square tins, with dozens of hot buns on each, were disposed of in every hour, from a little after 6 in the morning till after 6 in the evening of Good Friday.

Those who knew what was good better than newcomers gave the preference to the original royal bun house, at which the King himself once stopped. Now customs have sadly changed among apprentices and journeymen, the comfortable tradesmen, their wives and children. The fame of Chelsea buns has departed, and the royal bun houses are no longer distinguished as such.

Saleswoman's Point of View.
A good story is told by Miss Forbes-Robertson, the English suffragist, as follows:

A fifth Avenue lady went into a New York department store, and while buying a pair of gloves from the saleswoman said to her:

"What do you think about suffrage?"

"Well," replied the girl, "I think quite know. I'm kind of afraid of the ignorant vote."

"Why," exclaimed the lady, "Don't you think the working women are fit to vote?"

"Oh, yes," replied the other, "You see, we're in the midst of things and know what is going on. It's that Fifth Avenue crowd I'm afraid of!"

So you see there is some doubt as to just what constitutes the ignorant vote.

Spring Cleaning.
Mrs. Christine Terhune Herriek, whose writings are read and appreciated by many Virginia women, remembering Mrs. Herriek as Christine Terhune, the daughter of Mrs. E. J. Terhune, during visits to her uncle, the Messrs. Haves, of Richmond, has written a practical and informing article on house cleaning in the March issue of Woman's of the Washington Post. Mrs. Herriek's views are expressed with a simple directness which renders them specially valuable. Some of her paragraphs are quoted for the information of housekeepers generally:

Don't Begin Too Early.
It is a mistake to begin house cleaning too early in the season. If it is done while winter is still with us, dust will accumulate again from the furnace, mud will be tracked into the house and the bright days of real spring will be met by rooms already grown dingy.

The easiest way to clean house is to do it all at once, turning everything inside down, having all carpets taken up at the same time, all the windows washed in succession, all the paint scrubbed in one piece of work. If the family can be banished, this plan may be followed, but when the ordinary business of the home has to go on, such drastic measures should never be practiced.

The Kitchen Pantries.
The kitchen pantries should have a thorough cleaning. If grease has formed a crust on the inside of any of the pots, put it over the fire, with boiling water and ammonia, with a good handful of borax, and let boil well. Scour out afterward with a stiff brush. Cleanse the outside of the pot by scrubbing with a strong solution of washing soda. If rusted, rub the spots with a cloth dipped in kerosene; if the rust is on the inside, boil a handful of hay in the kettle. Throw away all rusted and leaky cooking utensils.

The Clothes' Closets.
Clean one clothes' closet at a time. Take out all the gowns, boxes, bags and carry them into the fresh air, to brush and shake. Sweep the closets out carefully, wipe up the floor, and scour the shelves with water, to which you have added borax generously. Be on the alert for any sign of a moth. Use insect powder freely. If there are unmistakable indications of moths, pour gasoline on the shelves and shut the closet up tightly for twelve hours. Be careful to have no light near while the gasoline is in use.

Room Cleaning.
Now select the room on which you will begin the cleaning. Take out the dust all your time to it. The carpet or rug must be taken up and sent to the cleaners or to the vacant lot to be beaten. If the latter course is followed, the floor covering may either be stretched on the grass or hung over a line and well whipped with one of the wicker carpet-beaters to be found in house-furnishing shops or with a stout switch. Leave the carpet to air while the floor of the room is scrubbed with water containing borax or ammonia. The boards should be entirely dry before the rug is laid down again. Give especial attention to the cracks in the flooring and around the baseboards, or anywhere else where moths may lurk.

Pictures Must Come Down.
All the pictures must come down, the glass and frames be wiped off with a damp cloth, and the walls gone over with a broom, around which has been wrapped a cloth, or with one of the long-handled, flat brushes which come off the top of the window casings, the doors, the cornice and the curtain fixtures before the room is finally scrubbed.



LE BON TON AND LE MONTEUR DE LA MODE UNITED.

Suggestions to Hostesses

A writer in the current issue of Harper's Bazar offers suggestions in the way of table decoration that are worth reading. Here are some of them:

Spring Decorations.
For an informal tea, reception or small luncheon table, try a high vase of dogwood branches in bloom. Set the vase in a plume of violets. Throw a few loose dogwood petals over the violets as though they had fallen there. For a small violet centrepiece, set a pan or bowl in a bird's nest. Trim mantel, mirror or doorway with long branches of peach blossoms and pussy-willows in a Japanese hanging vase or willow pocket. Apple blossoms with pink roses are exquisite. Rubra such as hyacinths and tulips, get the credit of being difficult to arrange, but plenty of the soft, pale, yellow foliage are the best help. Several whole plants transplanted into a pan or basket make a more graceful group than twice the number of cut trusses. Let one daisy-like flower be the center of the group, and place the straight lines of tulips, hyacinths and tulips were never meant to dangle about like roses—they like straight lines better. Try grading the colors of narcissi from rich orange yellow to pale cream.

For Easter Tables.
From wire and paper make an egg-shaped ball and cover with green moss, solid enough to hold its shape. Open a jagged hole in one side and life with a contrasting color. Trooping out of this hole and extending around the sides of the egg group a dozen stuffed ducklings. Let one duckling be in the act of jumping off, and others just emerging from among the flower stalks. An empty half egg shell with a duckling or chick in it, holding in its bill a tiny bunch of violets, makes an attractive place favor.

EMANCIPATION FROM DRUDGERY

Women everywhere will be rejoiced to hear that the day dawn of their emancipation from the drudgery of kitchen work is believed to be at hand. The secretary of the National Conservation Association has announced this fact as dependent upon the use of electric inventions.

Along with the welcome announcement to women, however, comes a warning from the conservationists that the General Electric Company is making an effort to gain possession of all the most valuable power sites in the country, and that women should be in a position to defend themselves against overcharges by monopolies for electric current.

Women might quote in reply to the warning the words of the poet, hatched though they be, to the effect that: "Tis ever thus from childhood's hour I've seen my fondest hopes decay." For while they are duly grateful over an emancipation, they will be obliged to look forward to it with a hampering degree of uncertainty in their minds, remembering the inefficiency of many great inventions which they are already supposed to enjoy, without having derived practical benefit from them. They recall the discovery of the Aladdin oven by Edward Atkinson. The final deliverance of women from kitchen cares was then thought to have arrived. But it had not.

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stand on their own hearthstones and wave them out of existence, because they have installed labor-saving machines in their households. The drudgery they conclude is a thing of the past, nothing is left to weary the soul and body of womanhood in future.

If women were studied a little more and machinery less, if the conservation of their domestic energy, expended in making homes for their husbands and children became the primary question taken into account, attention would be turned in a much-needed direction.

In all instances where men suffer from a monopoly they quickly remedy the situation. If women suffer in the same way, should not action be as ready and prompt? National welfare hinges on domestic conditions under which women work, and when inventions, inventors and such conditions are brought into proper relation, a real emancipation of the sex will begin.

Ginger Sandwiches

Crystallized ginger from the distant East—
The kind that often tops a home-made feast—
May be to other uses put. Here's one:
Chopped fine, each morsel gleaming like the sun,
Is dipped in orange-juice, then quickly spread
Between thin layers of fine wheaton bread.
Ah! ginger that's "hot 't' the mouth," 'tis true
I find you good. And so, without ado,
Will Martha, dumbed with her cares, when she
Has unexpected friends drop in to tea.
—Exchange.

SELECTED RECIPES.
A Dropped Egg.
A dropped egg, when properly cooked, is very delicious. Have ready an omelet or iron frying-pan two-thirds full of boiling salted water, allowing one half tablespoonful of salt to each quart of water. Put two or three buttered muffin-rings in the water. Break each egg, separately, into a cup and carefully slip into a muffin-ring. The water should cover the eggs. When there is a film over the top, and the white is firm, carefully remove with a buttered skimmer or griddle-cake turner to square pieces of buttered toast, from which crusts have been removed.
Sprinkle with salt and pepper, and garnish with toast points and parsley. It is quite as well to let each add butter for himself, after the yolk is broken. Dropped eggs are often made very tasty by spreading the toast with a fish or meat preparation.

The Russian Easter

Of the northern countries of Europe, Russia is the one which continues to attach a national and strictly orthodox importance to the several seasons of carnival, Lent and Easter. Carnival, or "Butter Week," as the Russians call it, is a general holiday. As with the old customs of the Western carnivals, there are pagan relics in the Russian festival, too. But the relics of paganism in Russia have often an extraordinary blending of Scandinavian and Asiatic myths, under a veneer of Christianity. There is nothing in them that recalls either Greece or Rome.

The Butter God.
In country districts of Russia a fantastic figure called the Butter God is prepared for carnival week. The peasants drive it about upon a gayly decorated sledge, singing special songs and folk choruses. At the end of the week the Butter God goes to burn, and a formal farewell is hidden to place a ure for the week that precedes Easter. In the towns the favorite amusement of the people during carnival week is sought on the artificial ice hills. Unsweetened pancakes, or "blini," constitute the chief daily dish in every household. One week of Lent, Holy Week, the Russians keep rigorously. The churches are then crowded with penitents of both sexes seeking absolution. Previous to approaching the confessional, a quaint and rather touching custom obtains during this week, namely, the habit of asking forgiveness of one's neighbors for any slight or wrong committed toward them during Easter Eve.

With Easter Eve dawns the principal and most solemn Russian festival of the whole year, alike for rich and poor. At the midnight mass every church is ablaze with candlelight; the shrines and icons are brilliantly illuminated, and each member of the congregation bears a lighted taper. After midnight comes the blessing of a small saffron cake, a toy pyramid of stiff curds and an egg. The last, the shell of which is broken by a newly-hatched chicken, is the emblem of Christ's resurrection from the tomb.

Easter Gifts in Russia.
What Christmas boxes are to the English, or New Year's offerings to the French, Easter gifts are to the Russians. At Easter the Russians celebrate not only the resurrection of Christ and their own spiritual awakening from sleep, but the resurrection of the whole earth and the release of all the agencies of nature from the enthrallment of winter.

Disappearing Table.
The woe of the architect, on account of the impossible things which women demand, things that no architect can accomplish, are exploited in the April Metropolitan.

These are a few of the impossibilities suggested:
Mrs. Jones announces with an air of a discoverer that she wants the man to be able to put in the ice from the outside, a plan which Mrs. Smith strenuously vetoes, because she says it enables the woman to cheat so easily. One of my architect friends recently received, more as a command than as a suggestion, the idea of a combination dumb-waiter and dining table. "A splendid idea," said the client; "the table can be set in the basement, then raised gracefully into place like an elevator."

"Yes," agreed the architect, "but when the table is down below, what happens to the hole in the floor?"

Old Wicker Furniture.
Old wicker furniture may be stained some attractive color, or enameled white and the cushions recovered with gay cretonne to match the side curtains. In painting or staining furniture of any kind, the greater care must be taken to have it absolutely dry, and amateur work of this sort should be done on a dry day. If the chairs are apt to stain, rub the stain does not seem ever to dry properly, but will always rub off. The chairs are apt to stain, rub the stain does not seem ever to dry properly, but will always rub off. The chairs are apt to stain, rub the stain does not seem ever to dry properly, but will always rub off.

If the lamp and candle shades are freshened or renewed with help a great deal in improving the appearance of a room. They need not be elaborate, but they should harmonize with the room in feeling and color. Simple shades may be made of cretonne, edged with gimp that are really lovely. If you are clever with a paint brush, shades may be made of water color paper, grass cloth and tracing cloth, and stenciling is also attractive to use in decorating them. Silk of all kinds can be used and all sorts of charming effects may be had. The wire frames can be bought in many shapes at many department stores, but if you wish any particular style or size they have to be made to order. A florist can often give the address of some wire-working company that does such things.

Suburban Gardening.
Frances Duncan has a charming article on "Suburban Gardening" in the April Century, which offers practical suggestions to women fortunate enough to own or rent a bit of ground. "Charm is an exquisite quality in a garden, but as rare and elusive as a heart's crush. It comes of itself when plants are happy and feel at home in the garden, and begin to live on terms of friendly intimacy with everything about them. It is powerless to bring a garden may be a blaze of color and an admirably arranged show-case of hand-some plants, but it may be as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal in the love for the plants is not there, while the staid and respectable charm of the gardener has a real love for it. When our gardens are loved, the question about their being charming is answered."

Check-Topped Shoes.
Next to the popularity of the banished front hair, the most important feature and certainly the most conspicuous one of feminine apparel just now is the check-top shoe. The most varied in this season of the under in dress, and as remote from the conservative and which this generation of families, as may well be imagined. Of course, it is designed for the woman who tries to wriggle her way through the present fashion of her life in the yard-and-a-quarter-wide skirt—yes, even that unbelievable width of skirt is still seen in gowns but just from their makers! For, her there are check-topped shoes, with points curling slightly upward, which, because every movement she makes pulls the skimpy skirt away from her feet, literally insist upon being looked at. Sometimes a slender foot so shod will appear protruding, but if nature has not made the foot within such a shoe well formed, the spectacle is pitiable. These check tops are in gray and white, black and white, and blue and white, with about various usually, and with touches of black about the top in the way of a patent-leather piping set down the front and back seams of the upper, and buttons to match the dark or line in the check.